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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 36th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. ELARABY	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. PATOKALLIO (Vice-Chairman)	(Finland)

CONTENTS

- Action on draft resolutions under all disarmament items
- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 65, 68 and 142 (continued)

ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS UNDER ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: This afternoon we shall proceed to take action on a number of draft resolutions contained in clusters 2, 3 and 4: specifically, draft resolutions A/C.1/L.47/L.2, L.13/Rev.2, L.14, L.48 and L.52.

In connection with draft resolution A/47/C.1/L.26/Rev.2, I should like to remind members that at the 35th meeting of the Committee, on Tuesday, 17 November, the representative of Togo informed the Committee that the sponsors of that draft resolution had decided not to put it to a vote. Therefore, the First Committee will not take any action on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.26/Rev.2.

We shall now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.14.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.14, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa", was introduced by the representative of Kenya, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, at the 30th meeting of the Committee, on 11 November 1992.

In connection with this draft resolution, it should be noted that there was an oral revision to the fourth line of paragraph 6, according to which the words "in Harare, Zimbabwe," would be added after "1993". With that revision, paragraph 6 reads:

(Mr. Kheradi)

"Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Organization of African Unity, to take appropriate action to enable the group of experts designated by the United Nations in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity to meet during 1993 in Harare, Zimbabwe, in order to draw up a draft treaty or convention on the denuclearization of Africa, and to submit the report of the group of experts to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session;".

In addition, I should like to point out that draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.14 has programme budget implications, which are contained in document A/C.1/47/L.51.

The CHAIRMAN: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L/14 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.14 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The first speaker in explanation of position is the representative of Norway, on whom I now call.

Ms. SKYMOEN (Norway): I wish to explain the position of the five Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway, on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.14, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa".

The present draft is a great improvement over last year's more controversial resolution 46/34 A, on which the Nordic countries were obliged to abstain. We note with appreciation this positive change, and we are pleased to be able to join in the consensus this year.

The Nordic countries share the general aims of this resolution, and welcome South Africa's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its conclusion of a full-scope safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

As far as operative paragraphs 4 and 7 are concerned, the Nordic countries, for their part, are working on the assumption - fundamental under international law - that pacta sunt servanda unless proven otherwise.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom delegation was happy to join in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.14, which has just been adopted. We should, however, like to comment on operative paragraph 6. In introducing the draft resolution on 6 November, the representative of Kenya asked delegations to weigh against the cost the benefits likely to derive from one further meeting of experts for the purpose of drawing up an appropriate draft treaty or convention.

We have no objection in principle to the proposed further meeting for the purpose envisaged. We do, however, believe that the resources necessary to

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

fund the meeting should be found through the redeployment of existing resources.

The CHAIRMAN: We now proceed to cluster 3. We will consider first draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.2.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.2, "Regional confidence-building measures", was introduced by the representative of Cameroon at the 23rd meeting, on 2 November 1992, and is sponsored by the following countries: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, France, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, and Zaire.

I should like to remind the Committee that, at the 23rd meeting of the First Committee, this draft resolution was orally revised by the representative of Cameroon as follows: in the third preambular paragraph, the words "and 45/58 P" were deleted. Any further references to "45/58 P" should be deleted.

As this draft resolution has programme budget implications, which are reflected in document A/C.1/47/L.50, it should also be noted that there is a minor technical error in the table in paragraph 11. Item I, B, 3 refers to travel and daily subsistence allowance for "2 staff members from New York"; the paragraph refers subsequently to "2 General Service" staff members. The figure "2" should be changed to the figure "1". The same change should also be applied to item II, B, 3, to bring the figures into accordance with the tally mentioned in that paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen

Against: United States of America

Abstaining: Armenia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.2 was adopted by 132 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.*

The CHAIRMAN: We turn next to the draft decision in document A/C.1/47/L.52. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

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* Subsequently, the delegation of Mauritania advised the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): Draft decision A/C.1/47/L.52, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific and United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean", was introduced by the representative of Kenya, and is sponsored by the following countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, China, Costa Rica, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, France, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mauritania - on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States - Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uruguay - on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States - and Viet Nam.

The CHAIRMAN: The sponsors of draft decision A/C.1/47/L.52 have requested that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, may I take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly?

Draft decision A/C.1/47/L.52 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolutions just adopted.

Mr. SERGEEV (Russian Federation) (interpretation from Russian): The Russian delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.2, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures", on the basis of its support for efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels with the aim of easing regional tension and further implementing measures in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation.

At the same time, we are concerned about the possible implications, for the regular budget, of certain provisions of that draft resolution. We believe that the activities of the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa should be carried out on the basis of financing on a strictly voluntary basis and that they should have no implications for the regular budget of the United Nations.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.2, the United States strongly supports the concept of regional confidence-building measures and is pleased to see an initiative by Africa to implement confidence-building measures in the African region.

While we share the intent of this draft resolution - and we supported the corresponding resolution last year - we are again obliged to consider its financial implications. In this respect, we were assured last year, when we supported a similar draft resolution on this issue, that additional funds

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

would not be needed this year to cover the cost of implementing these efforts. We were given to understand last year that all future costs would be borne by the participants themselves or through voluntary contributions rather than from the regular United Nations budget, which is funded by assessments on all United Nations Member States.

We were therefore disappointed to discover that, not only is such funding sought through the regular United Nations budget for this year's operation of the Committee, but that the costs will be recurrent and will have long-term, expanding and significant budgetary implications. It is for this reason that the United States was compelled to vote against this draft resolution. It is our hope that future funding will be provided through the regional arrangements and voluntary contributions. When this occurs, the United States will again be happy to support the draft resolution.*

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom): My delegation wishes to explain its abstention on the draft resolution that has just been adopted on regional confidence-building measures, the text of which is contained in document A/C.1/47/L.2.

Last year in this Committee, the United Kingdom made clear in an explanation of vote on resolution 46/37 B our view that any follow-up to the organizational meeting held in Yaoundé should be funded from within the existing programme budget for 1992-1993. My delegation is therefore disappointed to note in the statement on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.2 that the request in operative paragraph 4 calls

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* Mr. Patokallio (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

for continued assistance to be provided by the Secretary-General for the implementation of the programme of work of the Standing Advisory Committee, described in the report of the Secretary-General A/47/511 dated 23 October 1992. In addition, my delegation believes that the call for two meetings to be held in Bujumbura and Libreville in 1993 and funded from the regular budget of the United Nations is out of step with resolution 40/243.

It is my delegation's view that the costs associated with the implementation of this draft resolution, which are potentially both long-term and significant, should be borne by the participants in the programme and supplemented if necessary by voluntary contributions. Recourse should not be made to the United Nations regular budget.

Notwithstanding our concerns over the funding of this project, we reiterate our firm support for such regional initiatives as the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa has developed.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2, in cluster 4.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2, entitled "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes", was introduced by the representative of Kenya, who submitted it on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, at the 30th meeting of the Committee on 11 November 1992.

The CHAIRMAN: The sponsors of this draft resolution have requested that it be adopted without a vote. As I hear no objection, may I take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly?

Draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Ms. MOULES (Australia): Australia supported draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2, which has just been adopted, despite a number of hesitations, particularly in respect of the ninth preambular paragraph. We question the relevance of that paragraph in a resolution of the First Committee, since the efforts referred to in that paragraph concern hazardous wastes, a matter, we believe, that is appropriately dealt with in the Second Committee.

We note also that a recent investigation conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme confirmed that the efforts referred to in the ninth preambular paragraph were in fact aborted and that no conclusive evidence of actual hazardous waste dumping was found.

(Ms. Moules, Australia)

Australia is sympathetic to the main thrust of the draft resolution, which draws attention to and expresses legitimate concern about the potential hazards underlying any use of nuclear waste which would constitute radiological warfare, and about their implications for regional and international security.

We have some further concerns, however, about the appropriate venue and organization for consideration of a legally binding instrument, as referred to in paragraph 8, which needs to take account of the various competences and the ongoing work of the Conference on Disarmament, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the International Maritime Organization. We note that in the case of sea dumping the appropriate organization is, of course, the International Maritime Organization, which is responsible for the London dumping Convention and which receives some technical advice from the IAEA.

With regard to land disposal of radioactive wastes, this clearly comes under the responsibility of the IAEA. However, we would prefer not to pass judgement one way or another on the IAEA's work on this issue until we have a better idea of what is intended. Indeed, at this stage we are not in a position to judge what recommendations, directed at what organizations, might be appropriate.

We would also not wish our having joined in the consensus on this draft resolution to be interpreted as indicating Australian opposition to land disposal of radioactive wastes as such, which at this stage is the only possible alternative for storing such wastes. We reaffirm, however, our unqualified opposition to the dumping of nuclear wastes by any State or organization which would constitute radiological warfare and would have grave implications for the national security of all States.

Mr. ROTH (Sweden): My delegation was able to support draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2 because my Government considers all dumping of radioactive and harmful wastes a very serious matter. However, my delegation wishes to point out that the subject of the present draft resolution is in its essence hardly a matter within the purview of the First Committee.

Furthermore, it should, in our view, be observed that the reports about efforts to dump harmful wastes in Somalia referred to in the ninth preambular paragraph have, to the knowledge of my delegation, not been substantiated. It goes without saying that if these reports were proved accurate my Government would look upon such dumping with the utmost concern. My delegation is, however, somewhat hesitant about the inclusion of that paragraph in the draft resolution without substantiation.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom would like to explain the position of the European Community and its member States on the draft resolution which has just been adopted, the text of which is contained in document A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2.

The Community and its member States regard radioactive-waste dumping as an important issue which has given rise to legitimate concerns, especially in and among developing countries. The environmental and public safety aspects of this issue should continue to be considered in appropriate forums, such as the London dumping Convention, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), where a code of conduct has already been adopted, and the Second Committee of the General Assembly. Radioactive waste is a subject suitable for discussion in arms-control forums only in so far as such waste could be one source of radioactive material that has the potential to be used in radiological weapons.

(Sir Michael Weston, United Kingdom)

When this item was considered in the First Committee at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, successful attempts were made to remove from the relevant resolution, resolution 46/36 K, all references to issues which were extraneous and which did not fall within the purview of this Committee. We had hoped that similar attempts this year would also have been successful. However, despite all the efforts made, the draft resolution just adopted still contains, in its penultimate preambular paragraph, a reference to matters not within the competence of the First Committee.

Against this background, the Community member States would like to put on record that had there been a vote on the ninth preambular paragraph they would have abstained. But as no vote was requested, we decided to join in the consensus on the draft resolution as a whole. We nevertheless urge those concerned to ensure, for the future, that draft resolutions submitted under this agenda item revert to last year's model - that is, that they eschew any references to issues which do not fall within the competence of the First Committee.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): Very much like those who have just spoken to explain their positions on draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2, the United States joined in the adoption without a vote of that draft resolution, entitled "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes". However, we should like to put on record our concern about the ninth preambular paragraph. That paragraph refers to "recently reported efforts to dump harmful wastes in Somalia" (A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2, ninth preambular paragraph). Although the indiscriminate dumping of toxic waste is a serious matter, it is not an arms-control issue and is therefore inappropriate here.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

Had a vote been taken on this draft resolution, the United States would have abstained.

Furthermore, the United States is not willing to define radioactive-waste dumping as radiological warfare. In our view, radioactive-waste-dumping practices cannot be regulated by arms-control measures. Nor are we willing to deal with radioactive-waste-dumping practices in the arms-control context. These practices concern environmental and public-safety issues which are already addressed in other forums. We would note in this regard that the appropriate forum for considering the transboundary movement of radioactive wastes is the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Therefore, we join the European Community in urging those concerned to ensure in the future that draft resolutions submitted under this agenda item avoid references to issues that are not within the competence of the First Committee.

Ms. MASON (Canada): Regarding draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.13/Rev.2, in respect of which my delegation too joined in the consensus, Canada would like to associate itself with the explanations of position which have just been made by the representatives of Australia, Sweden, the United Kingdom on behalf of the Twelve, and the United States.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has now taken action on all draft resolutions and draft decisions under disarmament agenda items, with the exception of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.4 and the amendment contained in document A/C.1/47/L.48.

(The Chairman)

A large number of delegations have expressed the desire that, in view of ongoing consultations, action on this draft resolution and the amendment thereto be taken at a later stage, namely at the meeting of the Committee this Friday, 20 November. Accordingly, unless I hear otherwise, I shall take it that the Committee decides to postpone consideration of this issue until Friday.

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Members will recall that programmes 1, 2 and 7 of the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992 through 1997, entitled "Programme planning", have been included in the First Committee's agenda for review. As the item itself, item 105, is an item before the Fifth Committee, the First Committee has been requested to transmit its views and recommendations to the Fifth Committee to enable it to finalize its recommendations to the General Assembly on this item.

In view of the urgency of the matter, it is my intention, with the agreement of the Committee, to forward to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee the texts of the three letters I have received from the representatives of Cuba, Mauritius and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland respectively - that is, documents A/C.1/47/L.10, L.11 and L.12, concerning agenda item 105. If I hear no comments on this matter, I shall take it that the Committee agrees with this procedure.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: Accordingly, I shall transmit the texts of those three documents to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.

(The Chairman)

I should like to remind members that, in accordance with the Committee's programme of work and timetable, following the consideration of, and action on, draft resolutions under international security items, the Committee will begin its gemeral debate, consideration of, and action on, agenda item 66, "Question of Antarctica", on Monday, 23 November.

I therefore urge members to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible in order to enable the Committee fully to utilize the conference facilities available to it for this purpose.

The next meeting of the Committee will be announced in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.